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## THE DEFAULTER.

LOST to the world in the recesses of a Canadian wilderness, where he is alike secure and miserable, a man of originally good intentions, but perverted from them by overpowering temptations, sits down to make all the amends he can to society, for the injuries he inflicted upon it, by fixing his history before its eyes, as a warning to prevent others from falling into the like errors.

I was the only son of a gentleman in the south-west district of Scotland, whose estate, from various causes, had almost entirely vanished just about the time when I entered into life. My father was an aged man, who, having lost his wife soon after my birth, had centred all his affections, and almost all his hopes, upon me alone. I received the best education that the country could afford, and, throughout my school and college years, associated with that class of minor gentry to which my father and a long line of respected ancestors belonged. Even in the midst of rapidly increasing embarrassments, my father formed the warmest hopes of me, "for," said he, to his friends, "if I should not be able to leave my son a penny, he evidently has talents to advance himself in any profession he may adopt." At eighteen, I was placed in the office of a country law practitioner, to ground myself in the practice of that profession, previous to my passing as an advocate at the Scottish bar. This latter step, however, I was prevented from taking, by my father having obtained, from a political ally, the promise of a confidential situation for me in a government office in Edinburgh. In due time this was obtained, and I was transferred accordingly to the capital, to undertake its duties.

In Edinburgh, there lived, during the winter months, many families with whom I had been reared on terms of intimacy; and as the duties of my place, though inferior to my original expectations, were neither servile nor of great severity, I was able to mingle still in this agreeable society. I entered into it much too freely. I devoted too much of my time to the show and parades of gay life. There were, I must say in my own defence, great temptations. I had all my life been in contact with gay and pleasant things. I had never known the pressure or the pain of mean circumstances. Persons of my father's order had always been around me, and to have descended from them to friends of an humbler rank, never seemed to me necessary, or, if it had appeared otherwise, would perhaps have been impracticable. In short, I was a person who had a name to support, genteel acquaintances to keep up with, and high tastes to be gratified, and yet was unprovided with a half of that share of the goods of fortune which would have been necessary to an individual so circumstanced. To make up the deficiencies of my salary, I applied to my father, but was informed by him that his affairs were in such a state as to preclude the possibility of his assisting me. He recommended me to make my income go as far as possible, and to endeavour, by diligence and exemplary behaviour, to get it increased; "for," said he, "the old estate, burdened as it is, cannot much longer survive these declining markets and reduced rents; and I fear that your own industry and talents must eventually be your only portion. I am deeply grieved," he added, "to convey this information to you; but it is consolatory to reflect, that my distresses can hardly be traced to any imprudences of mine, and that I have a son who possesses the ability, if he be inspired with the will, to redeem the fortunes of our family."

At this period I was so much buoyed up with the light and gay ideas of youth, that I suffered comparatively little from the narrowness of my income. I

was advancing in the confidence of my superiors, and prospects of promotion and increase of salary were held out to me. Friends, also, were not wanting to tell me, that, with my address, figure, and ancient name, I might be expected, even though destitute of fortune, to make what is called "a good match." Thus I went on, enjoying both the present and the future, till at length I did obtain a considerable elevation in my department. At the same time that I was increasing my income, I was lessening my expenditure, for I had become tired of the frivolities of gay life, and addicted myself to the more economical and more profitable enjoyments of study. As for the good match, I never permitted myself to think of it. The affections always appeared to me too delicate and valuable a portion of our natural property, to be pledged away for mere lucre. I was rather inclined to the opposite extreme, of marrying for personal considerations alone, even though these, perhaps, could only be indulged in defiance of certain worldly maxims which bear the aspect of prudence. I thought it a noble thing to have it in one's power to select some gentle and amiable, though perhaps penniless being, who, from the very assurance that no drossy motive mingled with my preference, would be the more truly, the more purely, the more devotedly attached to me.

It would have been very proper to have exercised a privilege of this kind under circumstances which rendered it prudent. Had I waited for a considerable number of years, until my income was such as to enable me to indulge in the luxury of a generous choice, no one could have blamed, though many might have sneered at me. Unfortunately, long ere this prudential period arrived, my affections became fixed upon a young lady who appeared to me as possessed of almost every personal and mental charm—the youngest of a large family which moved in a very respectable circle, and several of the female members of which were already well married. Though an object of very general admiration, this young person retained all the simplicity which adds so much to the grace of the female character; and I soon perceived that her heart, though sought by many others, was reserved for me. It was madness in one so poor to bid for a jewel of such high price. Bid, however, I did, and in no long time the precious object was mine.

My wife had respectable connections, but no fortune. Her friends could hardly but be aware that my resources were not adequate to support her in the style of life to which she had been accustomed; and I afterwards learned that some demurring had taken place amongst them on this very account. The respectability, however, of my birth—the prospect of my farther promotion—and perhaps the largeness of the unprovided family to which she belonged—formed reasons for their assent; and our marriage accordingly took place with the full sanction of all who had any interest in my spouse's welfare.

The great range of new relations and connections to which I thus became allied—while it might have been of much advantage to a young man entering upon a profession—was of material detriment to me. To have denied ourselves society was almost the only means by which we could hope to neutralise in any measure the imprudence of our union. In order to escape the doom which lay before us, we would have required to live entirely by ourselves; we would have required to be all in all to each other, and to have forgotten that a world existed around us. It was, indeed, upon some romantic calculation of this kind, that I had reconciled myself, against many misgivings, to so early a marriage. It soon appeared how vain were all such anticipations. At the very time

when, if our own taste had been consulted, we would have sat for whole evenings together—speechless—voiceless—dreaming only of the happiness of being for ever devoted to each other—we were hurried by the irresistible calls of custom into festive assemblies, where we had no pleasure—save when, through long vistas in the throng, our eyes happened to rest on the beloved form—never to be mistaken—in which we mutually contemplated something better than all the world beside. In proper time, these assemblies had to be repeated in our own quiet home; and we gradually became involved, in spite of every resolution to the contrary, in the same system of visiting and entertaining which prevailed amongst our friends. Nor, I must confess, was this altogether unsanctioned by my own feelings and temper. As I loved my wife beyond all earthly objects, I also had kindly feelings for her numerous kindred. One and all, they were welcome to my house and heart; at least they always were so when they were in my presence, however convinced I might be, in moments of private reflection, of the imprudence of entertaining them so frequently, and in such numbers. There was, moreover, a multitude of other persons, including my own personal friends, who sought our society, and whom my good nature could not reject. All this was wrong—was even in some measure criminal; but it was in compliance with customs and feelings which are not easily put aside. I was disposed, as much as any man, to shudder at the idea of contracting debts which I could not honourably discharge; yet a man may be in circumstances (and such were mine) where the remote consequences of debt, however dreadful, make a much fainter impression on the mind, than the smaller but immediate pain of assuming a cold or churlish air to an individual who happens, through the merest accident, to be in the way of claiming his hospitality.

So far as our happiness depended on ourselves, we were happy. My wife, gentle, affectionate, and intellectual, proved all that I had expected. I, on the other hand, devoted to her the whole of my leisure, and endeavoured by every means to deserve and secure her attachment. Our life—for it was one—was an uninterrupted series of kind offices and mild words. How rich, I often thought, am I, in possessing the love of this generous and gracious being! Oh, rich beyond all expression—but alas, I would again reflect, it is a luxury to which I am not entitled; I am indulging in happiness which I have not means to purchase; I am fraudulently taking that which should have fallen to the lot of some other and wealthier man! Thus, her very kindness, which in distresses of another kind would have operated as a relief, too frequently awakened only the pang of conscience, and the dread of some awful, though as yet undefined, catastrophe. In time, two beautiful infants were added to our little household, and new joys—accompanied, however, by new miseries—were opened to me. What, under other circumstances, would have given pleasure inexpressible, now chiefly raised only the most gloomy forebodings. Debt had now hung its leaden chains around me. I was tormented daily by claims which I possessed no means of satisfying, and which were always becoming more and more vexatious. The instalments of my salary, as they periodically fell into my hands, were abandoned without reserve to my creditors, who were always very ready to accept of any sum, however small; but while I was thus left destitute of all means of meeting my current expenses, the evil was only put off, not overcome. For a while, I was supported under my distresses by the hope of a more lucrative appointment; but, through some oblique influence, another obtained the place.

In an evil hour, and under the pressure of a pecuniary obligation which threatened me with the loss of even my present office, as well as my station in society, I persuaded myself to borrow (as I mentally phrased it) a part of the government funds then in my hands; fully believing that I should be able to replace the money before the next day of settlement. Painful and alarming as the expedient was—for I could not conceal that it was so—it gave me for the time so agreeable a feeling of relief, that I must have been more than mortal if I had not soon become reconciled to it. Another draught was made—and another—and another!—and long before the balance-day arrived, I had contrived a means of eluding detection. Immediate troubles were thus neutralised. My home once more became one of comfort. But oh, the bolts of remorse and terror which occasionally shot through my soul, as I reflected on my guilt! Often have I sat in the midst of a hundred comforts, during the prevalence of those biting storms which give domestic enjoyments so high a relish, and yet there did not wander through the flooded street a wretch so forlorn and wretched, but I would not have exchanged my fate with his, provided he were more innocent than I. The most squalid and shelterless object, who, lame, diseased, and despised, shivered from door to door, picking up a miserable subsistence from the garbage of kitchens, appeared in my eyes as incomparably happier, if he only could reflect upon deeds less guilty than mine.

Though my errors were not at first nearly so great as they afterwards became, my sufferings were then far more severe than afterwards. In time, I was able to apologise in some measure for my turpitude, by calling up the vision of my necessities, and by convincing myself, that, since no individual lost by my speculations, they were of comparatively little moment. He who has once been tempted into crime is never in want of sophistical arguments for its extenuation. To deaden my mind the more to a sense of guilt, I launched more freely than ever into the tide of fashionable gaieties, and, above all things, became remarkably benevolent to my inferiors, and to every kind of needy applicant. It might have been supposed that an individual under such circumstances would have rather been disposed to live as sparingly as possible: I am persuaded, from my own feelings, that the natural tendency is exactly the reverse. Social converse is demanded by such a wretch, as a kind of relief from his own gloomy thoughts; and the exercise of benevolent feelings appears to him as a palliation of his offences.

The means which I had contrived for escaping detection were of such a nature, that, though I might have proceeded for many years in the same course, an accident at any time would make all clear to my superiors. I therefore lived in a state of perpetual fear, inasmuch, that an unusual noise, or even the sound of a rapid foot behind me, invariably communicated a certain degree of alarm. During this period, my conduct at the office was so obliging, so quiet, and so inoffensive, that, by superiors, equals, and inferiors, I was alike beloved. On the other hand, my domestic behaviour was of the most exemplary kind. My wife was pointed to by her friends as the happiest of women; and our children were famed for the excellent nurture which they received. Our household was looked upon by all who ever entered it as the home of prosperity and peace; and I was envied by many, whose feet I could have licked with transport, if I could have been made as guiltless as they. The whole strain of my behaviour I can now trace to an unconscious desire of laying up good opinions against the evil day which was to denounce me as a wretch and an outcast.

That evil day at length came—as I knew it must. It came in the midst of domestic calamity and woe. My wife had been confined a few days before; and she and her child were in that state where death is looked upon as equally probable with life. Two of our other children, including one on whom I doated to distraction, were suffering under one of the severest of the whole range of infantile diseases. Late one evening, when I was about to leave the office, a letter was received from the superior board in the metropolis, expressing some doubt about our accounts, and requesting certain information which might elucidate them. As the error, if error it was, appeared to have occurred in my department, orders were given that I should next day apply myself, with several of the junior clerks, to an investiga-

tion of the matter: it never occurred to my superiors that the mistake could be a wilful one, or connected with any act of defaulture. This entire absence of suspicion enabled me to hear the intelligence with serenity; and after expressing a matter-of-course acquiescence in the order, I left the office in my usual manner. My bosom, however, was already a prey to the most dire sensations. I reached home I know not how—for blindness was in my eyes, and doubt and terror in my steps. The servant who opened the door to admit me was in tears: this was the first thing which recalled the power of reflection. "Is it your mistress?" I hurriedly inquired. "Oh, no, sir," answered the girl, and she sobbed out the name of my beloved child. I was rushing forward, when she seized me by the arm, and told me, as well as her sobs would permit, that, by the request of the surgeon in attendance, the death of the child was to be concealed from the mother, and that the latter, who had just fallen into a sleep, was to be kept quiet, if we valued her life. I was cooled in an instant. I approached the chamber where my dear infant lay—took but one kiss of his scarcely cold lips, and shed but one bright tear on his marble forehead. The other, which lay at no great distance, I pressed to my bosom, as if I could have hoped to shelter him *there* from the stroke of death too evidently impending. I then passed to my own room, possessed myself of all the money I had about me, and wrote a letter to a friend at the distance of a day's journey from town, informing him of the reason of my departure from the country, and beseeching him to come instantly to the succour of my family—if he still could retain any interest in a wretch who deserved the worst that he and the rest of the world could award. My next movement was toward the room occupied by my wife. She slept profoundly. Within the gentle flexure of her arm lay her infant, also asleep. Upon her pale cheek sat the placid expression of a mind at ease with itself, though perhaps soon to pass through the dreadful scene of death. How different the emotions of that gentle and resigned bosom from those which possessed my own! Guilt, remorse, and despair, were approaching the tower of innocence and repose—repose, alas, soon to be changed for anguish not to be conceived. For one minute I gazed on that blessed countenance, with an intenseness of contemplation that confessed my slender hopes of ever seeing it again. A lifetime was compressed into that space. Much as I wished to press my lips to her face, I dared not—for it might have awakened her, and exposed me to a scene I would have died rather than encounter. With one parting look, in which the grief of years was concentrated, I tore myself away, and left the house.

In a few weeks I had reached a country where my person was secure from the consequences of my guilt. I immediately wrote to my friend, informing him of my place of refuge, and entreating that he would convey the intelligence to Maria, if she still lived, and inform me in return of every circumstance of any interest that had taken place in consequence of my departure. In due time I received a letter—and, oh joy of joys! it was from my wife. Notwithstanding the distress into which she was plunged by the detection of my criminality, she had recovered from her illness, which in reality had passed the crisis on the evening of my departure. She expressed a just sense of the enormity of my offence, but, knowing that my nature was originally good, she had been able to pardon me in her own mind, and was now desirous of rejoining me, in whatever part of the world, or in whatever sphere of life, I might be placed. I read the letter with transports, and fondly trusted that happiness, though I never could deserve it, might again be mine.

Wretched dreamer that I was! Ere six months had elapsed, my wife and her surviving children, for whom I had provided a kind of home in the wilderness, perished on their passage to America, together with scores of fellow-creatures, all of whom no doubt left many hearts to mourn for their loss, but no one to feel the mortal anguish of mine. On hearing of the fate of the vessel and its passengers—for not a soul survived to afford the possibility of a doubt—I shrunk abashed and horror-struck from human converse, as if the intelligence had taxed me with the murder of those dearest to me on earth. About the same time, I learned that my aged father had not long survived the intelligence of my infamy, which had covered not only him but the whole circle of my friends and connections with shame. The old man had always cherished the most extravagant hopes respecting his only and beloved son. After being informed of my sudden and disgraceful departure, he had hardly spoken a word to a living being, but sat dull and forlorn in his room, neglecting even those books of piety, from which, when consolation was less required, he had never failed, according to his own frequent declaration, to derive it. The conscience-stricken murderer of all who held me dear, I have now lived for many years apart from my kind—despised by all who ever think of me, but alas unable to despise in return, for I am only too deeply sensible of the errors I have committed. My fellow-

creatures give nothing, and take nothing from me. I ask nature only for the means of supporting life, and content myself with what she readily gives. But vain is every effort of busy self-love to excuse the crimes which have driven me from society. They wring my heart by day and by night, and, even thus far from accusing faces, I ever feel the dread scorn of the world, and acknowledge the justice of its infliction.

#### STREET EXHIBITIONS IN LONDON.

NOTWITHSTANDING all causes of impediment in the thoroughfares of London are deemed nuisances by law, itinerant performances of various descriptions are to be seen in the streets, and more particularly in the genteel suburbs of the metropolis. The inhabitants do not profess to encourage absurdities, but they are not proof against the drollery, dexterity, or talents by which they are accompanied. Often may be seen at the windows, grandfathers, fathers, with their ladies, looking over the heads of children placed in front, all testifying their enjoyment by laughter and remuneration, that produces a most profound bow from the cash-collector.

Some of these street performers, with surprising dexterity, will continue to pass four or six gilt balls, the size of a hen's egg, from hand to hand, before them, and behind them, with such rapidity as to give the appearance of the balls having described circles in the air. Others balance objects, weighty as a cart-wheel, or light as a peacock's feather, with equal adroitness. Tumblers, with their lofty somersets, or numerous flip-flaps, may surprise many by the flexibility of their joints, but they astonish all who behold them pass alternately in and out between the rounds of an ordinary ladder twenty feet in height. In an adjoining street may be seen a swarthy complexioned individual with a large poodle dog, on which is seated a monkey habited like a general of division: he halts, draws his sword, salutes, returns his sword to its scabbard, takes off his military hat decorated with a huge feather, replaces it, and then, as if conscious farther exertions were unnecessary, he dismounts, clambers up the iron railings in front of the house, and seats himself with all imaginable gravity, bowing to the inmates; during which his conductor grinds on a harsh-toned organ one of Mozart's tenderest airs. All this is irresistible: the boys take a bone to the dog, the girls an apple to the monkey, and the parents give some coppers to the man, who, smiling, takes off his cap and looks out for another customer.

Then comes a Swiss, playing on a pipe and tabor some original composition within the compass of four natural notes, his eye glancing at the windows—if the persons remain, he arranges his exhibition. On the ground he places a narrow board three feet long, with a peg about a foot high at one end; to the top of this he attaches a cord; then from his pocket he takes two puppets eight or ten inches high, representing a lady and a gentleman fashionably attired; the cord is passed through their bodies and attached to his knee; he places the puppets at the extremities of the cord, and begins to play his pipe and tabor. All is done with rapidity. The puppets, being well poised, move to the action communicated by his knee to the cord, with some gracefulness, till they approach each other, when, by a jerk, they separate, and continue to dance calmly or boisterously, as the operator shall have discovered most agreeable to the taste of his spectators, until he pockets their cash.

Next appears a group of dancers in stilts: these generally are children from ten to fifteen years of age, who are very expert and fearless while hopping and capering about five or six feet from the ground, to the most discordant sounds that can be produced from a clarionet. The stilt is about an inch and a half in diameter: at a given height there is a projecting piece of wood, on which the foot is strapped; and the upper part of the stilt is secured below the knee. Thus placed, the children are enabled to endure inconvenience and fatigue for hours.

It is deemed highly reprehensible for ladies or gentlemen to remain gazing at any of those amusements; but well-dressed individuals may be observed to pace to and fro while the exhibition lasts, their smile declaring the scene is not quite so horrifying as some persons have asserted; while there are others of the same class who stop and laugh, in concert with a crowd of children, who never fail to form an audience on such occasions.

Then may be met two solemn-looking persons—one carrying a small box, and blowing a trumpet with such power that its curves might be expected to start



into a straight line—the other person carrying a wooden framework, about ten feet high and three feet square, the upper portion fitted up like the interior of a theatre, open to the front; the lower portion is surrounded by a cloth to hide the operator, who, as he walks along, utters a singular yell and cadence, known as the voice of Mr Punch. Children, boys, girls, and men—who, in this case at least, are but children of a larger growth—are all attracted. An audience is collected—down goes the framework—the covering-cloth is adjusted—and the theatre is ready in a minute.

Mr Punch appears. This is a puppet ten or twelve inches from the waist upwards, with an enormous face, huge nose, mouth widely grinning, projecting chin, cheeks covered with grog-blossoms, a large protuberance on his back, and another on his chest; yet, with all these deformities, he appears uncommonly happy. He is possessed of a tremendous bludgeon, with which he amuses himself by unceremoniously rapping on the head every one who approaches him. There are several scenes with his wife Judy, his medical adviser, and some officers of justice, through all of which Mr Punch is merry as he is reckless: he sings amid his cruelties; and though he suffers much, he is ultimately victorious.

If philosophers sometimes unbend to remark on such passing trifles, it will not appear strange that three or four hundred light-hearted individuals should be seen in front of such an exhibition; many, perhaps, feeling somewhat ashamed, yet joining in the laugh; others endeavouring to be superior to such ribaldry, yet remain to see it all, or stalk away just before the concluding shout of general approbation. This common exhibition is managed by the hands of the director, being hidden beneath the dress of the puppets, his finger and thumb acting as the arms; and thus, raised a little above his head, he is enabled to make the puppets struggle and combat with each other very dexterously, often exciting not only the applause, but the astonishment of his audience.

There is an exhibition not so commonly met with in the streets, to which all others are inferior: it is called the Fantoccini, and is a superior kind of Punch-like exhibition. Two persons are concerned; a framework, as in the preceding exhibition, is carried by one, and the other bears an organ, from which something like music may be heard. Before a house, at the windows of which persons of respectability appear, the Fantoccini pauses; if the persons retire, it passes on unobtrusively; if they remain, the little theatre is quickly prepared. The curtain rises, displaying a well-painted theatre in miniature: the organ strikes up a hornpipe in piano, and forth springs a well-formed figure, dressed in jacket and trousers, about ten inches high, imitating the varieties of step, and keeping the time with such correctness as would puzzle a dancing-master to excel. At the conclusion, the little sailor, with a switch twisted under one arm and his hat in the other, joyously trips off, as if conscious of having deserved applause. The curtain drops; but in two or three minutes again rises, discovering a rope, extended on two cross-pieces, for dancing upon. The organ changes to some elegant air, in which the time is marked; a graceful figure enters, springs on the rope, with its balancing-pole, and displays all the manoeuvres of an expert performer on the tight-rope. The slow and elegant movements of this dancer are pleasingly contrasted to the great activity of the sailor, and they never fail to produce a great degree of satisfaction. Perhaps, from the ingenuity and skill displayed in the Fantoccini, persons will remain tranquil spectators of this exhibition, who would turn in disgust out of the street in which Mr Punch might be careering. The Fantoccini is managed by invisible silken threads, which sustain the body; other threads attached to the different points are arranged with great precision to the fingers of the director; and thus, from long habit, he is enabled to give a perfect resemblance to natural actions and characters. But the Fantoccini admits of endless variations in the appearance and attitudes of the puppets. Some years ago we made one of a delighted group who witnessed the Fantoccini at Vauxhall, where, of course, the Lilliputian drama is much better managed than on the streets. One scene we shall never cease laughing at when it comes in our recollection. It was that of a jolly gentlemanly-looking person, a puppet of the usual size, who came upon the little stage, and danced with amazing activity and propriety. All at once, at a point of the performance, he shook off one of his arms, which instantly became an individual dancer. He next threw off a leg, which in its turn was transformed into another figure. His remaining leg and arm followed; and, last of all, he shook off his head, which immediately commenced dancing also, leaving the trunk dancing by itself in great vigour. Thus, a regular reel of six persons was struck up; but soon a new feature was developed. The little figures began to attach themselves to one another; and at length the original dancer was once more the only figure on the boards. All this was executed, as usual, by invisible threads, and the rapid substitution of puppets, but with wonderful skill; and if people, like the Vicar of Wakefield, will sometimes "allow themselves to be happy," they can hardly fail to have a hearty laugh at the drolleries of the Fantoccini.

These street performances usually occupy twenty minutes, or half an hour; on going off, the Fantoccini generally receives a remuneration in silver

from the principal of the house, and pence from bystanders.

There may be degrees of absurdity in the manner of wasting our time: but there is an evident affectation in decrying these humble exhibitions, by those who will sit till one in the morning to witness a pantomime at a theatre-royal.

It is well known that Swiss and Italian performers of the above description, during a few months in London, obtain sufficient to maintain themselves in comfort at home during the remainder of the year; and, however unworthy the pursuit may appear, it furnishes a proof of the results of perseverance with economy.

### THE SETTLERS.

A STORY OF WESTERN AMERICA.

IN the year 1816, the family of a Mr Mason arrived towards sunset at a settlement, eight miles south of the Iron Banks, in what is commonly called the Jackson Purchase, on the lower Mississippi. The family had emigrated from New England, and consisted of this gentleman, a man of dignified appearance, though indicating fatigue, exhaustion, and feeble health, and turned of forty years; his wife, an interesting woman somewhat younger; and five children, four sons and a daughter. George, the hero of this story, was a boy of fourteen; Eliza, his sister, was a sweet girl of twelve; and Henry, Thomas, and William, the younger brothers, were eight, six, and four years old.

It was obvious, from the fatigued and weather-beaten appearance of the family, and their being apparently much exhausted, that they had travelled a long way; and a slight inspection of their dress, and the hired waggon that had brought them and their effects from the banks of the Mississippi, where they had debarked from a flat boat, manifested that one of their trials had been want of sufficient money to bring them comfortably over such a long way, by such a tedious and expensive route. There was a shyness about them, too, which marked, however they disguised it externally, that their hearts revolted from the outlandish and foreign aspect of the tall planters, dressed in their deer-skin hunting-shirts, a rifle on their shoulders, and a dozen ragged and listless negroes lounging behind them. Real dignity, however, is an internal thing, and belongs only to the mind. A family could not have been reared, as they had been, where self-respect had been inculcated every day and every hour, both by precept and example, without showing the influence of this discipline, be their dress and appearance in other respects as they might. Their look of decency and uprightness at once awed and repressed rude and impertinent curiosity, and made the vulgar rich, who had come to be spectators of the arrival of the family, shrink from the manifestation of that unfeeling and insulting superiority which such people are apt to evince in the presence of those who are poorer than themselves. Mr Pindall, the owner of twenty-five negroes, and Mr Garvin, the owner of fifteen, were among the dozen nearest settlers who had come professedly to welcome them to their cabin in the woods. There was much rough but well-intended complimenting, and proffer of aid and courtesy, and desire that they might be better acquainted; in short, all the kindly-meant ceremonial customary among such people on such occasions. At present, however, this wayworn family little heeded these offers. Wherever they looked around them, upon the dark and sterile woods, whose leaves were falling about them, or into the roofless and unfloored cabin where they were to shelter for the night, the whole scene was desolate and chilling. After being left in solitude, they made such preparations for repose during the coming night as were within their power to effect; and in a short time they all betook themselves to their places of rest.

The father of this family of emigrants had for many years pursued a professional life in one of the populous villages of New England, and had been widely respected, by all who knew him, for his excellent character and abilities. He was, however, subjected to a series of unforeseen misfortunes, which completely ruined his prospects; and not being a person of a particular firmness of disposition, he was about to sink under a complication of lowness of spirits and bad health, when the idea of removing to the western states as a settler entered his mind, and took his fancy. Mr Mason was not by any means the person best calculated to undergo the privations and toils of a settler's life; nevertheless, resolving to make the most of this new line of life, and perhaps animated by a desire to leave a part of the country where he had experienced the severity of misfortune, and, as he thought, the neglect of friends, he now lost no time in making the necessary arrangements for the departure of himself and family for the land of promise. After having crossed the Alleghanies, and touched at one of the towns on the Ohio, he took the earliest opportunity of purchasing, on report only, and without having seen it, a small lot of land, with an unfinished log-house, in the midst of a clearing of three acres, situated within eight miles of the banks of the Mississippi.

Here, then, like thousands similarly circumstanced, this family, which had been reared in comparative affluence, was once more compelled to begin the world, trusting to industry and integrity of principle for the chance of success. Influenced also by pious hope, Mr. Mason and his wife and children did not despond under the disagreeable circumstances in which they were now placed.

Immediately after breakfast, next morning, the father was seen in company with George, making mortar from the clay, and exerting himself to fill up the intervals between the logs, and, in all the common expedients of the country, to render the rude log-hut a warm and secure shelter from the frosts and rains of the approaching winter. In a couple of days, which fortunately continued fair, the house had a roof of split wood, which would turn the rain, and a wooden chimney, plastered with clay mortar, capable of carrying off the smoke from the fire in the interior. In these, and some other little improvements, one or two neighbours kindly gave their assistance, and in a short time the habitation possessed many comforts for the new settlers.

When the first white frosts of November rendered an evening fire necessary—when a bright one was kindled on their broad clay hearth—when their shutters, for glass they had none, had excluded the uncertain light and the chill air of evening—when the table, made with an adze from white poplar clefts, was spread before the cheerful blaze—when the repast of smoking corn loaf, sweet potatoes, and fried bacon, were arranged on it—when the fragrant tea was added, in remembrance of New England, for they still retained a few pounds, brought all the way from that country—and when the whole was seasoned by that appetite which is felt in such cabins, and by industrious backwoodsmen, in the highest perfection, the guests at this humble feast had no need to envy those of any other. They were happy in each other, and their happiness had an additional zest, from the novelty of their situation, and the hopes which were entertained of their clearing in the woods.

Mr Mason's farm was of very limited dimensions, but afforded sufficient scope for the support of a family. On every fine clear day, before the sunbeams had dissolved the frost, he was employed girdling the trees; while George, with his little axe and grubbing-hoe, was busy by his side rooting up the shrubs and smaller trees, delighted with the mellow appearance and healthy smell of the virgin mould. To cut down those large trees, which had to be necessarily removed, was to both a matter of serious difficulty, there being not only a lack of skill, but a feebleness of muscular strength, in the parties; and the removal of a single Mississippi sycamore, which would have been nothing to a regular wielder of the axe, required three days of persevering exertion. But the severest of the whole experiment was splitting rails for fences. This was a task absolutely beyond the strength of young George; the kind-hearted boy was therefore assiduous in handing the wedges and the maul to his exhausted father. In this most laborious business, there is a dexterity to be learned only by practice. Many a tree cut down with great labour, would not split at all. It was long before Mr Mason, with his utmost exertions, could make twenty-five in a day; and it was painful to be told by those who looked on the work, that one hundred and fifty a-day was the regular task of each of their negroes. At night, the father's hands were one blister, and poor George could count his blisters too. Mrs Mason bound up their sore hands, and turned away her face to conceal her tears. This species of severe toil caused Mr Mason rheumatic pains and sleepless nights. But the voice of complaint was not heard, nor the look of dejection seen in the household. Hope still cheered the family on. The winter was passed, and spring now dawned in all the gay luxuriance of the fertile and lovely territory. The labours of the family were now perceptible in their results. The clearing had in four months increased from six to nine acres, which were well fenced and prepared for planting. The surface of the soil was easily acted upon; and the Indian corn was planted, without any ploughing, in the open spaces among the rows of tall deadened trees. The father went before, making a hole for the corn with his hoe; George followed, dropping the grain, and covering it up; while Eliza, with her face shaded by her large sun bonnet, and Henry, with his broad straw hat, with little bags pinned to their sides, walked beside George and his father. They carried beans, the seed of pumpkins, squashes, and cucumbers, and the different kinds of melons, to hand to each, where a place offered that seemed suitable to these seeds.

The season that followed was favourable, and their crop came forward to their utmost hopes. To watch its daily advance was a constant source of amusement. But the sad leaven of sorrow and discouragement remained at the bottom of the cup. The high heats of this southern climate began to make themselves felt early in April. The lassitude that ensued was unpleasant, and at length disheartening to the last degree. Half an hour's labour in the field, after the sun was fully up, completely drenched Mr Mason in perspiration, and left him powerless to renew his work, until he had rested an hour on his mattress. This was but the beginning of serious misfortunes to the family. Midsummer came, and furnished their table with green corn and nutritious vegetables; but their joy in the prospect of their crops was damped, by ob-

serving, that, as the summer advanced, the health of the father more visibly sunk under the influence of the season. He could no longer labour abroad, and his son George, although working from morning till night, could not so much as keep down the weeds that grew with overpowering vigour in the little farm. As the heats increased, so did the strength of Mr Mason decline. Every day he grew weaker, and, with his decline of health, the paleness of foreboding anxiety was spread over every countenance in the family. A neighbouring physician was applied to, but his visits were of no benefit to the invalid, who sunk rapidly under a raging fever. The tale of his distress need not be protracted. In a brief space of time he breathed his last, in the arms of his beloved wife and grief-stricken children.

Previous to his dissolution, Mr Mason had inculcated on his family the absolute necessity of their bearing up against their bereavement. Their situation, he represented, was one of great difficulty, but not without a prospect of future comfort. The moral admonitions, and the pious sentiments of the dying father, were not neglected after his decease. The body of Mr Mason was buried under a spreading tree in one of his own fields. The days that followed seemed of immeasurable length. George and Henry went to the field, as they had been wont when their father was alive; for, on the first morning after the funeral, it was agreed, that, to proceed to their duties as usual, was the proper construction of the dying charge. But it was soon felt by all that the exertions of two boys of such an age would never be able to keep the ground in cultivation, and yet extend the bounds of the clearing. It was too much for their moral and physical capabilities. Behold, then, this forlorn family in an opening in the immense forests of the Mississippi deprived of their main stay and support; destitute of friends; struggling with obstacles, presented not so much by their situation as their poverty, without a hand to save them from misery. By the exertions which the two boys could use, famine was certainly prevented from entering their dwelling, for the exuberance of nature in their little farm furnished them with a plentiful enough supply of plain food. During their distress, their field had been ripening, and they therefore beheld the approach of the second winter without any immediate apprehension of starving. But it is a sad fact, that a family may suffer, and suffer acutely, from poverty, after the fear of the want of food is removed. The clothes which they had brought with them from New England were wearing out, and they had no means of replacing them. The deer-skin dress, so common in the country, was still more expensive to purchase than the cheap domestic articles. Either were alike beyond their means, which, as regarded money, were entirely exhausted by the sickness and death of Mr Mason. There are many resorts and expedients in such cases to which backward people are accustomed, which this family had yet to learn. The decent pride of the mother had hitherto kept the clothes of her children whole, by patching and mending. But this could not be possible much longer. It is the real pinching and misery of poverty, for such a family to see one another becoming ragged, and an object of scorn to the rude and undistinguishing passengers. The mother felt acutely the deficiencies of her family, and saw, also, with humiliation, rather than the natural maternal pride, the ripening beauty of her daughter, so strongly opposed to the forlornness of her dress and condition. Her own troubles of the same sort were as nothing in the comparison.

In this state of unhappiness the family began to be vexed by another harassing circumstance likely to lead to the most disagreeable results. Their neighbour Pindall, the wealthy farmer, died, and his property fell into the possession of his son, Hercules Pindall, a boisterous and assuming young man, who now put forth a claim to the land on which the Masons were located. Their title to the property was, he alleged, less valid than his, and threats or dark insinuations began to be thrown out as to the future residence of the family on the spot, although regularly bought and paid for by the Masons. Whatever might have been the exact justice of this novel claim, it appeared in the estimation of the family as utterly groundless, though dangerous to their peace, seeing that it was made obviously with the view of compelling the now lovely Eliza to listen to his addresses. The advances of Hercules Pindall, thus strengthened as he imagined by the dread of the litigation which was mysteriously threatened, formed the subject of long and melancholy cogitations to the family, who, with the hope of ultimately tiring out the patience of the young half-savage wooer, agreed at present in a temporising line of conduct.

Between this standing subject of annoyance, and that of resorting to some more advantageous mode of life, the family had sufficient to engage their attention. Whenever the question of the future course of the family was in discussion, and the investigation was followed by gloom and despondency, George failed not to ply his father's last declaration, that God never forsakes them who do not forsake themselves. They were in health, he said, and in a country where sustenance was easy to be procured; and if they could only hit upon the right way, some one might surely be devised in which they might become independent of Hercules Pindall and every body, and take care of themselves. The searching for this way was now

anxiously pursued. Many schemes, in their simplicity, they thought of, but all were futile. At length, an accident occurred which promised to turn out to their advantage. George had been noticed for his cleverness and good principles by the postmaster on the bank of the river, and he inquired into the circumstances and character of the family. He was a man who had both an understanding and a heart, and he often was occupied in the benevolent desire to be useful to them. As a beginning, he occasionally lent George a newspaper, which was to both him and the family a source of great delight and edification. The result which ensued points out the great good which the circulation of newspaper intelligence can accomplish even in the poorest cottage. The projects and discoveries in the arts and manufactures were brought into their view; and among other inventions they noted with keen interest that the town from which they had emigrated had become famous for the manufacture of a new kind of grass bonnets, in imitation of Leghorn straw. A premium of fifty dollars had been obtained by a schoolmate of Eliza's for a bonnet of this kind, which had sold for thirty dollars besides. Here was in a moment a grand idea elicited in the minds of the Masons. The whole family, from seeing the manufacture going on about them in New England, had become familiar with all the mysteries of cutting, splitting, bleaching, and plating the straw. The grass fit for this manufacture grew abundantly in their fields, and so they resolved on setting about the making of imitation Leghorn bonnets and hats.

We need not minutely detail the efforts of the family in this interesting domestic manufacture. At the opening of the spring, they had completed two bonnets and eight gentlemen's hats, which they prepared to sell. The ploughing of their field was kindly executed by two adjacent planters. This instance of attention by these friendly neighbours inspired them with new courage, and was regarded as an omen of future good fortune. This grand difficulty overcome, it was proposed, that, before planting, George and Henry should carry the fruits of their winter's industry to the village on the banks for sale, at the time when they were advertised by the papers that a steamboat would arrive there from New Orleans. It seemed the only chance, though they admitted a slender one, that offered for a market for their bonnets and hats. It was a beautiful March morning when they started, and the swelling buds of the spicewood filled the air with aromatic fragrance. Wherever they crossed a river with a southern exposure, they saw the delicious meadow-pink and the red-bud in flower. Every object on their way was of a freshness to cheer; and they too were full of the freshness and buoyancy of youthful existence, and the sweet illusions of hope were diffused over their minds. On reaching the banks of the mighty father of waters, they found that the steamboat had just fired its cannon, and swept to the umbrageous shore in all the pageantry of display. It may be imagined what an imposing spectacle it presented to boys, who for so many months had seen nothing but log-cabins and trees. The deck was covered with gaily-dressed passengers; and as the plank was laid down to afford a communication with the banks, it was announced that two hours would be allowed to take on board wood and other native produce for the use of the vessel. With palpitating hearts, our two little heroes now ventured along the plank to the deck of the steamboat; and it was only after mustering up all his courage, that George took the liberty of asking one of the gentlemen if he would be pleased to buy any of his hats or bonnets. The gentleman answered carelessly, but kindly, "My boy, I have no need of either." But, as if struck with the singularity of the offer of such articles in such a place—"Let us look at them, though," he continued. "What kind of hats and bonnets do you make here?" To have a chance to display his wares was an unexpected advantage, and no small point gained. So he very modestly undid his handkerchief, and spread the contents before the gentleman. The gentleman felt a little surprised at the exhibition. "Come and look here, ladies," said he. "Why, they are fine. Upon my word, if we have not come all the way from New Orleans to a bonnet-market at the Iron Banks! Who made these articles?" he continued. "My mother and myself," answered George, who was now surrounded by a circle of ladies and gentlemen. Any person who has witnessed such a scene, knows how little feeling there is in such cases. Some of the ladies endeavoured to be witty by laughing and sneering at the bonnets. George felt every ill-natured remark upon his merchandise as an insult upon his mother, and every rude pull upon his bonnets as though it were upon his heart-strings. His temper was every instant ready to burst forth; but he saw that all depended upon self-possession and the suavity of his manner. His forbearance was not without its reward. All other sentiments gave way to admiration of the articles, and at length the greater part were purchased, and he was the owner of ten dollars and a half.

Such a revulsion of joyful feeling did this successful termination to their adventure produce! The two boys bounded on shore, as the vessel sailed off up the stream, and were not long in settling in their minds how to proceed. There was moored to the banks one of the extensive trading vessels of the Mississippi—a sort of floating shop, in which all kinds of goods are sold. To this they directed their steps. The two partners who managed

it probably took them to be boys bringing eggs on board for sale. One of them held out his hand to lead them on board.

"What do you ask for your eggs?" was the question. "We have none to sell," answered George; "but an imitation Leghorn bonnet, and a couple of gentlemen's straw hats."

The traders were shrewd fellows from Connecticut, whose business on the river, as they phrased it, with their true northern accent, was "trading and traffickings" and to whom no article of barter came amiss. Such an opportunity of doing a little in the way of trading was, not to be lost. The sight of so many goods arranged for show and effect on the shelves around, arrested the admiration of the boys from the woods. After a little pretended difficulty about the price, the traders purchased the remaining bonnet and hats; but it was part of the contract that the boys were to receive their pay in goods, and, moreover, to expend their money in purchases there, they engaging to furnish every article as cheap as it could be bought at the stores. This important negotiation arranged, George consulted with his brother as to the articles chiefly required in the household, and finally bargained for an assortment of printed calico, and other wares for female apparel, and shoes for his mother and sister. The imagination of the reader will easily supply the details of the reception of the two boys when they reached home with their bundle of goods; the subsequent improvement in the outward appearance of the family; and the silent joy and pride which animated the various members of the secluded domestic circle. Each felt as the industrious always feel after the performance of their proper duties.

The field in front of the log-but again waved in the beauty of autumn, and the family was once more cheered with the prospect of an ample harvest. Time sped on in noiseless privacy, and a degree of comfort was felt by all. But it was obvious that the exertions of the family, successful though they had been, were at best but precarious in their results. The making of bonnets and hats was tedious, and not to be reckoned upon in comparison with well-directed labour. Money was often required to pay not only the small taxes levied on the land, but different articles for which corn would not be taken in barter. The family wanted even a due supply of the instruments and other means of agriculture. Again, all were interested in devising some new scope for their exertions. The obliging postmaster again stood the friend of the family. In the general distress, George received a letter from this worthy man, informing him that a most favourable opportunity offered for his obtaining a clerkship on board of one of the capital steam-boats. The terms were thirty dollars a month; and he offered him, in consideration of the wants of the family, and the diminution of its means by his leaving it, to advance twenty dollars, on the prospect of his wages, to be expended as an outfit for his comfort. It went hard with Mrs Mason in hearing of this announcement, even although pleased that a prospect so advantageous lay before her son. But her duty obliged her to suppress all such emotions. She advised George to accept of the situation, and he therefore closed with the offer, more especially since Henry was now sufficiently able to take his place in charge of the field, and other affairs.

For some days George was not idle. He expended the twenty dollars for the comfort of the family during his absence. The night prior to his departure at last came, and a sad night was it for all. They mingled their voices for the last time in the song of evening praise. The last evening of tender and solemn considerations passed away. They parted before retiring to rest; and, according to arrangement, long before the sun rose he was gone.

George was turned of eighteen when he was thus thrown upon the world. Every thing in his new occupation was at first strange: every day he was in the midst of new scenes, and surrounded by new faces. But he kept steadily to his employment, and it soon became his cherished purpose to become the captain of a steamboat. With this view, he spent much of his time on deck, gleaming information concerning the river from experienced boatmen. It would here be tedious to trace the rise of this young man to the elevated station he aimed at. It may suffice to state, that he was at length appointed to the command of one of the largest steamboats sailing betwixt New Orleans and the main points on the great waters of the interior. This rise in the world was not accomplished before George had relieved his mother and family from their embarrassing condition. His connection with a steamboat had already awed down Hercules Pindall into something like good breeding—for the planters are anxious to keep on good terms with the managers of the floating vehicles on the river. This once boisterous cub now therefore was easily persuaded to buy the farm of the Masons on reasonable terms; and being no longer in his power, the family soon put an end to all his expectations. George, in time, removed his mother, sister, and brothers, to a comfortable house in one of the most pleasing villages on the Ohio. The children were forthwith put to school. Eliza, now fully formed and turned of eighteen, was exquisitely beautiful. Her complexion had received a slight tinge of olive from the climate. She had hitherto been as rustic in her dress as a shepherdess, and almost as untutored. She was now amply supplied with books, and, with a powerful mind to apply to them, studied to good purpose. It has been said that she acquired the various accomplishments of a refined female scholar, not without a knowledge that such would render her more worthy of the attentions for some time bestowed upon her by one of the best friends of her brother, the wealthy Mr Leonard, a gentleman of the best principles and the most engaging manners. Be this as it may, in less than a year after Mrs Mason's retirement to her present residence, her daughter was married to Mr Leonard, who carried his bride on a trip to the Iron Banks in the splendid steam-vessel commanded by Captain Mason.

This little story of the settler's family may now be ter-



minated with an admonitory remark to the youthful reader. Whenever you are in any way tempted to discouragement, remember the old maxim, that "the darkest time in the night is just before day." Exert yourself in hope. Be industrious, and, while innocent and diligent, respect yourself. Be zealous, though modest, in the performance of your religious and moral duties. Never despond, and assume the genuine American motto, "Don't give up the ship."

#### LAST ASSEMBLAGE OF FASHIONABLES IN THE OLD TOWN.

[FROM CHAMBERS'S TRADITIONS OF EDINBURGH.]

BETWEEN the heads of the Advocates' and Don's Closes in the Luckenbooths (a portion of the main or High Street of Edinburgh), and bearing the number 333, stands a land of no great antiquity or peculiar appearance, but remarkable for containing the house of Lord Pitfour, whose two sons, James Fergusson, Esq. M.P. for Aberdeenshire, and George Fergusson, Governor of Grenada, continued to reside in it till their deaths in 1820.

This is remarkable for having been the last house in the Old Town, occupied by a gentleman of fortune and figure. Governor Fergusson usually resided three or four months of the year in it, and his elder brother sometimes made a stay of a fortnight, in the course of his journeys between London and Aberdeenshire. Both of these gentlemen were eccentric in their manners; but we believe none of their humours were so strange, as their pertinacity in clinging to this old-fashioned mansion. It had been built and fitted up by their respected father; and it would have been a change as bitter as death, to have parted with it. They despised the prevailing rage of emigration, and continued to hold out against every temptation that the New Town could offer. The shivering Laplander never hugged himself more heartily among his snows, or more thoroughly contemned the accounts of warmer skies and richer soils, than did these old gentlemen felicitate themselves upon the comforts of the Luckenbooths, and laugh at the prospects of newer and more airy mansions.

Though they agreed with each other in their tastes as to a house, and, we believe, in many other particulars, there never existed a greater difference between two brothers, in respect of personal appearance, than between James and George Fergusson. James was a remarkably fat and easy-looking old man, with a good-humoured, gentlemanly face; while George, on the contrary, was tall, slim, erect, and nimble, with a face expressive of a sharp and lively temperament. James was "the justice in fair round belly, with good capon lined." George, though a younger man, seemed to have attained an age further, and was "the lean and slippered pantaloon." A portrait of James was published in 1818.

Governor Fergusson was supposed, and we believe justly, to be the "W—" of that agreeable book "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," which was published in 1819, the year before he died. The love of an Old Town residence is the same, and no less, if we may mistake not, their hatred of Whigs. Moreover, there was no gentleman whatever, besides the governor, residing at that time in the Old Town; wherefore, if W— was not an archetype of him, he must be a merely ideal personage. There is, however, another trait which completely identifies them, namely, their taste in wines. Governor Fergusson kept a most extensive choice of wines, and had a printed catalogue of them, of which a copy was given to each of his guests, at dinner, in order that they might chuse what they pleased. He always drank port himself, in which he was very curious; but was not the less indulgent to his friends, in placing every variety of his stock at their disposal.† He was a very kind and liberal landlord, and, on account of his transcendent wines, all his entertainments were popular. He sometimes gave what he called *luncheon parties*, which generally surpassed the *dinners* of other people. He also, now and then, gave *parties*, which were usually very gay, and attended by all the *beau monde*. The last party he gave was in 1819, when nearly the whole neighbourhood turned out to behold the splendid scene. He had not given any for some years before, and as this was expected to be the last he would ever give, and consequently the last that would ever be given in the Old Town, a vast degree of interest was excited on the occasion. It was certainly a wonderful sight to see this long neglected and plebeian street thronged with the vehicles of fashion, and full-dressed ladies from the west end of the town alighting among the druggists and huckabucks of the Luckenbooths! And it is well remembered by the neighbours, what embarrassments occurred among the company in ascending the narrow common stair, and how unmanageable some of the ladies' trains were, in that strait and dark defile. This was the last assemblage of fashionables that the Old Town ever saw, after which it bade an eternal fare-

well to all its greatness! Never shall it again witness so glorious and so romantic a scene, nor boast of an inhabitant like Governor Fergusson! We have appropriately chosen to conclude this portion of the "Traditions of Edinburgh," with the history of the last house in the Old Town, inhabited by a gentleman. Much was the Old Town beholden to him; for he clung to it while life permitted him, and postponed the date of its ruin thirty years! No person of his rank now remains within its precincts. The commercial and the working classes have overrun all its stately lands, and the fading and melancholy traces of its former population are fast hurrying to oblivion. Alas, how quick is the march of time! Some ancient persons now exist who remember since—to use their own phrase—the New Town was all corn-fields, and the High Street, Cowgate, and Canongate, were the sole resort of dignity and birth, as well as the refuge of poverty and vice. In a few years, these must have all followed the objects of their venerable recollection, and no living witness will be found to attest the tales we have told. Then may the youth of a new generation, after perhaps conning this humble record, sally forth over the scenes described, and wonder to find the ruined abodes of rank and magnificence become the dens,

"Where misery pours his hopeless groan,  
And lonely want retires to die."

#### STORY OF A SEAL.

THE first object commemorated in the way of sport, in the work entitled "Wild Sports of the West," is the seal or sea-dog, of which creature the following interesting little story is told. The author believes the story himself: why should not others? It ought to be transferred to the Boy's Own Book, or any work peculiarly adapted to interest, and, at the same time, improve the youthful feelings.

"About forty years ago, a young seal was taken in Clew Bay, and domesticated in the kitchen of a gentleman whose house was situated on the seashore. It grew apoc, became familiar with the servants, and attached to the house and family; its habits were innocent and gentle: it played with the children, came at its master's call, and, as the old man described him to me, was 'fond as a dog, and playful as a kitten.'

Daily the seal went out to fish, and, after providing for its own wants, frequently brought in a salmon or turbot to his master. His delight, in summer, was to bask in the sun, and in winter to lie before the fire, or, if permitted, creep into the large oven, which at that time formed the regular appendage of an Irish kitchen.

For four years the seal had been thus domesticated, when, unfortunately, a disease, called in this country *the crippaw*—a kind of paralytic affection of the limbs which generally ends fatally—attacked some black cattle belonging to the master of the house; some died, others became infected, and the customary cure produced by changing them to drier pasture failed. A wise woman was consulted, and the hag assured the credulous owner that the mortality among his cows was occasioned by his retaining an unclean beast about his habitation—the harmless and amusing seal. It must be made away with directly, or the crippaw would continue, and her charms be unequal to avert the malady. The superstitious wretch consented to the hag's proposal; the seal was put on board a boat, carried out beyond Clare Island, and there committed to the deep, to manage for himself as he best could. The boat returned, the family retired to rest, and next morning a servant awakened her master to tell him that the seal was quietly sleeping in the oven. The poor animal over night came back to his beloved home, crept through an open window, and took possession of his favourite resting-place.

Next morning, another cow was reported to be unwell. The seal must now be finally removed; a Galway fishing boat was leaving Westport on her return home, and the master undertook to carry off the seal, and not put him overboard until he had gone leagues beyond Innis Boffin. It was done—a day and night passed—the second evening closed—the servant was raking the fire for the night—something scratched gently at the door—it was of course the house-dog—she opened it, and in came the seal! Wearing with his long and unusual voyage, he testified, by a peculiar cry, expressive of pleasure, his delight to find himself at home; then stretching himself before the glowing embers of the hearth, he fell into a deep sleep.

The master of the house was immediately apprised of this unexpected and unwelcome visit. In the exigency, the beladame was awakened and consulted; she averred that it was always unlucky to kill a seal, but suggested that the animal should be deprived of sight, and a third time carried out to sea. To this horrible proposition the besotted wretch who owned the house consented, and the affectionate and confiding creature was cruelly robbed of sight, on that hearth for which he had resigned his native element! Next morning, writhing in agony, the mutilated seal was embarked, taken outside Clare Island, and for the last time committed to the waves.

A week passed over, and things became worse instead of better: the cattle of the truculent wretch died fast, and the old woman gave him the pleasurable tidings that her arts were useless, and that the destructive visitation upon his cattle exceeded her skill and cure.

On the eighth night after the seal had been devoted

to the Atlantic, it blew tremendously. In the pauses of the storm, a wailing noise at times was faintly heard at the door; the servants, who slept in the kitchen, concluded that the *Banshee* came to forewarn them of an approaching death, and buried their heads in the bed-coverings. When morning broke, the door was opened—the seal was there lying dead upon the threshold!

"Stop, Julius!" I exclaimed, "give me a moment's time to think of this barbarism."

"Be patient, Frank," said my cousin, "the *finale* will probably save you that trouble. The skeleton of the once plump animal—for, poor beast, it perished from hunger, being incapacitated from blindness to procure its customary food—was buried in a sandhill, and from that moment misfortunes followed the abettors and perpetrators of this inhuman deed. The detestable hag, who had denounced the inoffensive seal, was, within a twelvemonth, hanged for murdering the illegitimate offspring of her own daughter. Every thing about this devoted house curiously enough melted away—sheep rotted, cattle died, and blighted was the corn. Of several children, none reached maturity, and the savage proprietor survived every thing he loved or cared for. He died blind and miserable."

There is not a stone of that building standing upon another. The property has passed to a family of a different name, and the series of incessant calamity which pursued all concerned in this cruel deed, is as romantic as true."

#### THE ROBBERS OF THE RHINE.

TRoublesome and expensive as some of the usages and institutions of England are frequently acknowledged to be, there is always one great comfort in society, which cannot be met with in many of the *cheap* continental countries; and that is, the perfect security of life and property which prevails. We may travel unmolested along the public roads; sit at our firesides, in quiet enjoyment, in the midst of our families; or lie down to rest during the darkest nights, without the most distant chance of being disturbed by violent intrusion. The protection to life and property is thus perfect; and we may thankfully acknowledge that we live in the most civilised and most peaceful land under heaven. Compare this state of things with the wretched condition of the people in many parts of Europe, where there is at once a general bigotry and dissoluteness of manners, and where the civil power is so weak or so flagitious, that robbery and murder are hardly regarded, and certainly left unpunished. We have been led into this reflection by perusing the following account of the great robbing confederacy in Germany, which prevailed not many years ago, and which, if now modified, is still in full force in Italy. The account is given by Leitch Ritchie, in that exceedingly beautiful work, "Travelling Sketches on the Rhine," &c., forming Heath's Picturesque Annual for 1833, and may be abridged as follows:—

"Towards the close of the French revolution, the banks of the Rhine, and the surrounding country from Holland to Mainz, were the theatre of exploits as strange and wild, and the haunt of men as extraordinary, as any that are exhibited in history. The French laws were not yet in full operation in Belgium, nor the conflict of opinion and parties at an end. Every thing was in confusion. The very elements of society seemed to have been broken up and disorganised by the moral earthquake that had occurred. A lawless and reckless spirit pervaded all ranks of people, and made room, in individual cases, for the development of talents and energies, that, under ordinary circumstances, would have continued to slumber in embryo.

Energies so called up, must, like spirits summoned by sorcery, be evil in their nature; and accordingly a reign of terror commenced, scarcely less extraordinary than the events of the revolution itself. From Belgium, a criminal could easily pass into Holland if pursued, or into the countries bordering the Rhine; and there the minute subdivisions of the Germanic Confederation, in which each petty prince maintained a jealous independence of the rest, rendered pursuit almost hopeless. The policy, therefore, of great criminals, in their choice of localities, will be easily comprehended.

But as the genius of individuals began to gather together the elements of lawless power, and unite the various little roving bands in one compact society, it was seen that the magnitude of the mass would force the alarmed governments into a league against them, and that thus their very strength would prove their destruction. How to obviate this difficulty was the question—how to increase rather than diminish their numbers, and to tighten rather than relax the bond of union, without presenting any tangible surface to the authorities; and, out of the speculations on this knotty point, there arose at length one of the most remarkable associations that are mentioned in history.

Few of our readers, we believe, are acquainted even slightly with the subject; and, connected as it is with the localities through which we have just been wandering, it will be considered, we hope, no unaccountable service, if we now proceed to give some account of the

\* This story is abridged and altered from an American tale, the author of which is unknown. The original has been published in one of Miss Mitford's collections.

† His stock of wines, which were put up to public sale in the Exchange Coffee-room, brought upwards of £6000. One parcel, marked "my mother's wine," brought a great price, on account of its supposed age. Mrs Fergusson being known to have died forty years before the sale; but, after all, it turned out to be nothing better than a manufacture of the good lady's own, distilled from the humble Scottish gooseberry. He had a series of admirable cellars constructed according to his own taste, in Warriston's Close.

laws, institutions, and customs of the remarkable and mysterious banditti to which we allude.

The known and ostensible members of the band were diminished in number, rather than increased, by the new constitution. These, under the captainship of some individual raised to the post by his courage or talents, inhabited as their head-quarters an old castle or ruined mill, or pitched their wandering camp in the recesses of a forest. It was, in fact, easy to find a harbour capable of accommodating a much larger force, in times when so many country families had fled for refuge, from the horrors of war, to the more populous and protected towns. The roads between town and town were for the same reason comparatively deserted, except by travellers and merchants, and the villages cut off from all peaceable intercommunication.

Having fixed upon a camp, or rendezvous, the next important step was to secure the safe passage of the banditti through the territory, by establishing every where a line of posts, affording succour and shelter in case of need. This was easily arranged by enlisting in the cause the more needy and desperate of the innkeepers and albergistes. Some of these, in the country parts, had been left helpless and alone, like stranded barks, by the ebbing tide of population; and as their profession at any rate is not suspected of predisposing strongly to honesty, they were found in general to enter *con amore* into the proposals that were made to them.

In the slang of the robbers—a jargon compounded of Hebrew, High and Low German, and French—these places of refuge were called *Kochener-beyes*, whether public-houses or not; and there a member, when pursued, was sure of protection and advice; and his address, or that of the band, was always to be procured by those who wanted it for a friendly purpose. To such perfection had this system been carried, that it is understood that a robber could travel from the farther extremity of Holland to the Danube, with the certainty of spending every night in the company, or under the protection, of friends.

In numerous cases, also, the functionaries of police, from the magistrate down to the lowest officer, were in the pay of the band; and it was frequently observed that the anxiety of a robber, taken even in the fact, was at once dissipated, as if by a magic spell, on the name of the worthy being pronounced before whom he was about to be carried.

The persons we have described, however, were few in number, perhaps not more than a dozen men and their families. Where, then, were the banditti who kept the country in terror?—who, amidst the noise of fire-arms that was heard over half a province, carried villages, and even towns, by assault, and either plundered them of their moveable riches, or held them to ransom at the point of the sword? In the villages, in the towns themselves, in isolated farm-houses, in obscure or remote inns, were domiciled these mysterious freebooters. These were the body, and the former the soul; these the executive, and the former the legislative power of this invisible state. The former were the chiefs and their immediate attendants; the latter the great mass of the band, distributed over the face of the country, inhabiting their own houses, working at their own trades or professions, yet ready, at a signal understood only by themselves, to vanish from their homes and families, and follow, wherever they were led, to the death.

They were called Apprentices. They were bound to the society by the most tremendous oaths, which they were rarely tempted to break, well knowing that an invisible dagger hung over their heads, which was sure to descend even on a suspicion of their falsehood.

A fine young man of Aix-la-Chapelle was enrolled as an apprentice by the ferocious Jikjak of Mersen, and awaited impatiently the commands of his chief, being desirous not only of distinguishing himself in the career to which his follies had driven him, but of obtaining money enough to enable him to marry his sweetheart. It is not known to what weakness this was owing; but, unhappily, he divulged, one evening, the secret of his destiny to the terrified girl; and, the next morning, he was called by Jikjak, in person, to accompany him in an expedition. The youth followed more in shame than fear—inwardly resolving to make up for his harmless treason by gaining that day a character for courage which should command the respect of the whole band.

And yet, as he followed his mute and gloomy conductor, a misgiving at times came over him. There were numerous other apprentices, he knew, in Aix-la-Chapelle, and in the villages through which they passed. What kind of enterprise, then, could the renowned chieftain contemplate, in which he desired the assistance of only a single unknown untried individual? The young man shivered as they entered the black shade of a forest; but when his conductor stopped suddenly at a newly-made pit resembling a grave, his knees knocked together, and the hair rose upon his head.

'Perjured traitor,' said the chief, 'say thy pater noster, for thou must die!'

'I deserve death,' replied the apprentice; 'yet try me once again! To-morrow the girl will be my wife, and we shall remove—far from her friends and acquaintance—wherever you command! Only try me! I am as brave as thou!'

'Thou hast broken the laws of the band, and therefore thou must die! Down on thy knees—down!' and with one Herculean arm he bent him, by main

force, to the earth; while, with the other, he raised a hatchet above his head.

'Only hear me!'

'Reprobate! Wilt thou die without a prayer?' The youth submitted; and by the time the word 'Amen' had fairly passed his lips, the iron was deep in his brain.

The apprentices were evenly distributed over the country, and were prohibited from assembling, even at fairs, or on such casual occasions, in bodies of more than three or four. If they were seen by a chief in greater number, a significant sign commanded them instantly to disperse, and disobedience was sure to be followed by punishment. The same policy dictated the choice of distant scenes for their enterprises; and it was no uncommon thing for the citizens of Mainz to be visited by the banditti of the lower Meuse, or for the Weser and the Elbe to be thrown into consternation by the roving bands of the Rhine. An important expedition was rarely undertaken except by the advice and agency of one of their spies, called *baldovers* in the slang of the freebooters. These persons no sooner became acquainted with the existence and locality of a booty, than they opened negotiations with a robber-chief; and if he came into their terms, which were usually exorbitant, made the necessary disclosures.

The assembling of the band for any great enterprise was conducted with the cautious policy which distinguished this remarkable society. The members were generally summoned by a confidential messenger, or perhaps the chief in person, and set out for the rendezvous, sometimes alone, but never in parties exceeding three or four. Each man's mode of travelling was regulated by his usual habits, or by his wealth or grade in society. Some were on horseback, others in carriages, others on foot; and a few had the charge of bringing waggons for the transport of the booty. Frequently, the journey was performed in the middle of the night, and a sign of recognition therefore was necessary, which did not depend upon the organs of vision. When all had, at length, reached the place of rendezvous, an inspection of arms took place, and the *schnelles*, alias pistols, were loaded. The words were then given which were to signify advance or retreat; torches were distributed, to be lighted instantaneously, at a particular signal; and the column moved on in profound silence.

The captain marched at the head of his troop, armed, besides his other weapons, with a crow-bar, the baton of his office. After him was carried the ram, a classical engine, used for battering down doors and walls. It was usually a beam of timber a dozen feet long; but when this was not to be come at easily, a finger-post from the road, or a cross from the churchyard, if heavy enough to answer the purpose, was an excellent substitute. Then came the subalterns, bearing the other tools of their trade which they called *clamones*; and, finally, the private gentlemen of the band, armed, like the rest, to the teeth. The faces of the whole were blackened, or otherwise disguised; partly to prevent the possibility of recognition, but principally to impress the attacked with the idea that the robbers were of the same neighbourhood—although, in reality, they had probably never before been within a dozen miles of the place. Arrived at the bourg, or village, in which, to simplify the affair, we shall suppose that a single house was to be the object of attack, some persons acquainted with the localities were sent to muffle the church-bell, and kidnap the watchmen. No summons was given to surrender, no notification made of the coming attack. A tremendous shout declared the presence and purpose of the enemy; their torches, lighted at the same instant, flared suddenly up like meteors in the night; and the ram was applied to the principal entrance in the midst of a volley of musketry. The firing was kept up without intermission, being now especially directed to the windows in which any light was visible; the astonished inmates, deprived of all presence of mind by the sudden noise and confusion, stood staring at one another in dismay; and the rest of the town, believing that nothing less than a pitched battle was in progress in the streets, barricaded their doors, extinguished their lights, and hid themselves in their cellars.

The door at length yielded to the repeated blows of the ram, and the captain led the way into their land of promise. If any hesitation was evinced on the part of one of his followers, he turned round, and blew out his brains on the instant—such power being vested in him by the laws of the society. This military execution, however, was rarely necessary. Within grasp of their expected booty, the most timid became brave, and all rushed at once into the house, fighting their way, if the inmates had recovered their senses, and were in sufficient force to resist, till they were in possession of the field. The victims—men, women, and children—were then bound hand and foot, and wrapped up in mats or carpets; the building was illuminated from the garret to the cellar; and the search for plunder commenced.

When the booty was at length collected, packed, and ready to be transported, the captain called off his bloodhounds. If any of these were seriously wounded, they were placed on the shoulders of the rest: if an alarm of rescue was heard, they were slain; on the principle that 'dead men tell no tales.' When the rescue actually came, the banditti retired in military order, and sometimes made good their retreat under the fire of regular troops. When unmolested, they

fired a feu de joye, and began their march with fearful shouts and yells, waving their torches in the air; but, as soon as they had reached the place of rendezvous, the lights were simultaneously extinguished, their cries sunk into silence, and, separating into small groups, they vanished, like evil spirits in the night.

#### THE FEROE ISLANDS.

THESE interesting islands are situated in the North Sea, between latitudes 61° and 63°, almost equally distant from Iceland, Orkney, and Norway, lying between the three much in the same manner as the Isle of Man does between England, Scotland, and Ireland. The islands are in number twenty-two, seventeen of which are inhabited; and they are separated into six parishes. They range in length from north to south sixty-seven miles, and in breadth from east to west forty-five miles. They consist of a group of steep rocks or hills rising from the sea, chiefly of a conical form, and placed for the most part close to each other, some of which proceed with an even declivity to the shore; but the greater part of these declivities have two, three, or more sloping terraces, formed by projecting rocks, and covered with a thin stratum of earth, which produces a scanty crop of grass. Close to the sea, however, the land in general terminates abruptly in perpendicular rocks of from 200 to 300 fathoms in height. The highest of all the hills in these islands, and that first seen by navigators, particularly from the west, is Skalling, in the island of Nordstromoe. Its perpendicular height is 400 Danish fathoms, or 2240 English feet; but it is accessible to the very top, whence the view is one of the wildest and sublimest in nature.

The hills lie so close to each other, that the termination of the bottom of one is the commencement of the base of another, being separated merely by a brook or rivulet; and there are consequently no valleys of any extent. There sometimes occur patches of grass near the summits of the hills; but the mould most fit for vegetation is almost all swept away by the violence of the winds; and such is the smoothness and steepness of many parts of these hills, that no earth whatever could possibly remain on them. In general, what earth is to be found on them, is not more than eight inches in depth, and in the arable parts of the low grounds it never exceeds four feet. Strata of basaltic columns are found between the hills; and in their geological structure, generally, these islands bear an evident relationship to Staffa and the Giant's Causeway. Deep fissures of considerable extent are met with between the hills; and caverns are also frequent on the shores, which are the favourite haunts of seals. Some of these caverns extend so far that a boat may enter a hundred fathoms; some pass sheer through a hill, and are open at both ends; others through a whole island.

From the precipitous perpendicularity of the hills, it may be conceived that torrents of waterfalls are numerous, although many of them only appear after a heavy rain. Some of these, when the wind blows towards the rocks, are dispersed into a shower; during a hurricane, their waters are never seen after passing over the rock, being carried away into the atmosphere like a mist; and, when glorified with a rainbow, as is often the case, the spectacle is truly sublime. The most remarkable fall is called Fossaa, in Nordstromoe, consisting of two, one below the other, each computed at from 90 to 100 feet. It is, nevertheless, stated that trout have been seen to work their way up it. It is a peculiar characteristic of these islands, that there are no frogs, toads, lizards, serpents, snakes, or amphibious animals of any sort, in the interior.

It is ascertained that they were first peopled by some Norwegians in the ninth century, who retired thither from the sway of the renowned Harold Harfazer, king of Norway, and supported themselves after the manner of their fathers, by piracy. It is evident, however, from their language, which is a corrupted mixture of Old Danish, Finnish, and other northern dialects, that, subsequently, these were joined by emigrants from Finland, and other parts of Scandinavia. Magnus the Good, Harold's successor, afterwards reduced these islands to obedience, and they continued to belong to Norway until, upon the union of the crowns, they were annexed to Denmark. During the recent long continental war, some British privateers landed and plundered various of these islands; but the British government, on learning the circumstance, issued an order of council, declaring that the inoffensive islanders were not to be molested in consequence of the war between Great Britain and Denmark. Such is the generous temper with which Great Britain carries on hostilities, while other nations frequently aggravate the evils of warfare by the infliction of individual misery.

STROMOE is the largest of the Feroe Islands, being twenty-seven miles long and seven broad, extending S.E. and N.W. About a dozen villages are interspersed through it. Thorshaun is the capital, and is situated on a small tongue of land on the south-east of the island. It is the seat of government, as well as the staple of trade; and the residence of the principal



civil officers, such as the commandant, chief-justice, &c. There is here a Latin school (being the only seminary, indeed, in all the islands), and a neat church covered with slate. The town is defended by a fort constructed on a projecting rock, which was strengthened and repaired during the American war. The houses of the town are almost all built of wood, and the streets in general so narrow, that only one person can conveniently walk through them. The town contains only between 500 and 600 inhabitants. There was here formerly a mart for Danish East and West Indian goods, and a considerable trade carried on with Scotland; but this has almost entirely ceased since the termination of the American war.

Coal is to be found in almost all the islands, but none of the mines have ever been wrought, owing to the many natural obstacles to be overcome. It is also of an inferior quality. These mines were officially examined in 1777, when it was reported that they were in length about 12,000 feet; the height of pure coal being five feet; so that they contain fuel capable of supplying a thousand families for eight centuries.

From the Feroe Islands lying in so northern a latitude, the sun, during the three summer months, is scarcely four hours beneath the horizon; so that at that time there may be said to be no night—at least there is always light sufficient for enabling a person to read and write; but in winter the days are proportionally shorter, and would be excessively dark, if the deficiency of light were not in some measure supplied by the long morning and evening twilight. The heat, notwithstanding the high latitude, is more temperate in summer, as well as winter, than in the more southern provinces of Denmark. The sea around the coast never freezes. The weather is exceedingly variable, but, although necessarily damp and foggy, is by no means unhealthy—a fact arising probably from the frequency of the hurricanes of wind that sweep over them, and which are of the most terrific description.

The natives of Feroe are in general handsome and well made. In the colour and quality of their hair, one of the most distinctive features of the different human tribes, there is great variety, showing evidently the numerous countries whence they originally sprung. Their complexion exhibits a healthful mixture of red and white, embrowned by exposure to the weather. Their features are never disfigured by the small-pox, for this disease has not yet become endemic in these islands. The women are, for the most part, pretty and well proportioned, and possess great sensibility. The natives are all of a religious disposition; as, indeed, is, almost without exception, the case in all mountainous and solitary situations, where the mind has been in any degree instructed and christianised. When they have not the benefit of the clergyman's services on Sunday, they meet in church by themselves, sing psalms, and hear the service read by one of their number; while some one of them also preaches a sermon. They are of an extremely peaceable disposition; hospitable according to their means; kind and benevolent. They are strictly honest in their dealings with each other, and humane and compassionate towards strangers.

The population of these islands amounted, according to a census taken in 1812, to 5209. The whole of the king's revenue amounted, in the year 1790, to 3172 rix-dollars. Sheep form the principal riches of the islands, and the number possessed by them in 1812 was estimated at upwards of 35,000. Some individuals have flocks of 200 and 300. These sheep are allowed to run about both in summer and winter without ever being housed. The wool is in general coarse, and is torn off the hide in a very rough manner. On the more basaltic islands, the grass is uncommonly fattening and luxuriant. It has been remarked that the mutton fed on the basaltic grass is not only fatter, but of a much more delicate quality, than is found any where else.

The Danish government generally assigns the monopoly of the trade of these islands to some private mercantile company at Copenhagen, under the condition of supplying the islanders with a sufficient quantity of grain at a certain fixed price. The exports consist of horse kuit on the islands, to the annual amount of 100,000 pairs; tallow, fish, train-oil, feathers, skins, and butter. Bird-catching, however, is the chief employment of these islanders, who engage in it with considerable risk of their lives among the precipices and rocks.

The only bread used by the Feroe islanders is from barley grown in the island. Their breakfast consists of this bread, with milk, or fat. Their dinner is generally of halibut, or other fish, dried, soaked, or fresh; with a brose of oatmeal and water, and a little fat boiled in it. Their supper is their principal meal, consisting of barley-meal porridge, with milk; dried meat, or fowls, with greens and other vegetables. Their usual drink is simply milk or pure water; the only intoxicating beverage they use is ale, which they brew themselves; but that is only used on festive or solemn occasions.

It is a singular fact, that, amongst the few diseases with which these islanders are afflicted, one of the most troublesome is—the gout! It is attributed to their lying down in bed with their wet clothes, on coming home from labour, together with the excessive heat of their apartments, and their practice of sitting close to the fire, which unfits them for resisting the

sharp chillness of the wind. Like all isolated and primitive nations, the people labour under the influence of superstition, and are endowed with many peculiar notions regarding the world of spirits; but as civilization advances, it is to be supposed they will free themselves from all such absurdities.

#### WHITEWASHING.

[BY FRANCIS HOPKINSON, AN AMERICAN WRITER.]

WHEN a young couple are about to enter into the matrimonial state, a never-failing article in the marriage treaty is, that the lady shall have and enjoy the free and unmolested exercise of the rights of whitewashing, with all its ceremonials, privileges, and appurtenances. A young woman would forego the most advantageous connexion, and even disappoint the warmest wish of her heart, rather than resign the invaluable right. You would wonder what this privilege of whitewashing is. I will endeavour to give you some idea of the ceremony, as I have seen it performed.

There is no season of the year in which the lady may not claim her privilege, if she pleases; but the latter end of May is most generally fixed upon for the purpose. The attentive husband may judge, by certain prognostics, when the storm is nigh at hand. When the lady is unusually fretful, finds fault with the servants, is discontented with the children, and complains much of the filthiness of every thing about her—these are signs which ought not to be neglected; yet they are not decisive, as they sometimes come on and go off again, without producing any farther effect.

But if, when the husband rises in the morning, he should observe in the yard a wheelbarrow, with a quantity of lime in it, or should see certain buckets with lime dissolved in water, there is then no time to be lost; he immediately locks up the apartment or closet where his papers or his private property are kept, and, putting the key in his pocket, betakes himself to flight; for a husband, however beloved, becomes a perfect nuisance during this season of female rage; his authority is superseded, his commission is suspended, and the very scullion who cleans the brasses in the kitchen becomes of more consideration and importance than he. He has nothing for it but to abdicate, and run from an evil which he can neither prevent nor mollify.

The husband gone, the ceremony begins. The walls are in a few minutes stripped of their furniture; paintings, prints, and looking-glasses, lie in a huddled heap about the floors; the curtains are torn from the testers, the beds crammed into the windows; chairs and tables, bedsteads and cradles, crowd the yard; and the garden fence bends beneath the weight of carpets, blankets, cloth cloaks, old coats, and ragged breeches.

Here may be seen the lumber of the kitchen, forming a dark and confused mass; for the foreground of the picture, gridirons and frying-pans, rusty shovels and broken tongs, spits and pots, and the fractured remains of rush-bottomed chairs. There, a closet has disgorged its contents—cracked tumblers, broken wine-glasses, phials of forgotten physic, papers of unknown powders, seeds and dried herbs, handfuls of old corks, tops of teapots, and stoppers of departed decanters—from the rag-hole in the garret to the rat-hole in the cellar, no place escapes unrummaged.

This ceremony completed, and the house thoroughly evacuated, the next operation is to smear the walls and ceilings of every room and closet with brushes dipped in a solution of lime, called *whitewash*; to pour buckets of water over every floor, and scratch all the partitions and wainscots with rough brushes wet with soap-suds, and dipped in stonecutter's sand. The windows by no means escape the general deluge. A servant scrambles out upon the penthouse, at the risk of her neck, and, with a mug in her hand and a bucket within her reach, she dashes away innumerable gallons of water against the glass panes, to the great annoyance of passengers in the street.

I have been told that an action at law was once brought against one of these water-nymphs, by a person who had a new suit of clothes spoiled by this operation; but, after a long argument, it was determined by the whole court that the action would not lie, inasmuch as the defendant was in the exercise of a legal right, and not answerable for the consequences; and so the poor gentleman was doubly nonsuited; for he lost not only his suit of clothes, but his suit at law.

These smearings and scratchings, washings and dashings, being duly performed, the next ceremony is to cleanse and replace the distracted furniture. You may have seen a house-raising, or a ship-launch, when all the hands within reach are collected together; recollect, if you can, the hurry, bustle, confusion, and noise of such a scene, and you will have some idea of this cleaning-match. The misfortune is, that the sole object is to make things clean; it matters not how many useful, ornamental, or valuable articles are mutilated, or suffer death, under the operation; a mahogany chair and carved frame undergo the same discipline; they are to be made clean at all events; but their preservation is not worthy of attention.

For instance, a fine large engraving is laid flat upon the floor; smaller prints are piled upon it, and the superincumbent weight cracks the glasses of the lower tier; but this is of no consequence. A valuable picture is placed leaning against the sharp corner of a table; others are made to lean against that, until the pressure of the whole forces the corner of the table

through the canvass of the first. The frame and glass of a fine print are to be cleaned; the spirit and oil used on this occasion are suffered to leak through and spoil the engraving; no matter, if the glass is clean, and the frame shine, it is sufficient; the rest is not worthy of consideration. An able mathematician has made an accurate calculation, founded on long experience, and has discovered that the losses and destruction incident to two whitewashings are equal to one removal, and three removals equal to one fire.

The cleaning frolic over, matters begin to resume their pristine appearance. The storm abates, and all would be well again; but it is impossible that so great a convulsion, in so small a community, should not produce some farther effects. For two or three weeks after the operation, the family are usually afflicted with sore throats or sore eyes, occasioned by the caustic quality of the lime, or with severe colds from the exhalations of wet floors or damp walls.

I knew a gentleman who was fond of accounting for every thing in a philosophical way. He considered this, which I have called a custom, as a real periodical disease, peculiar to the climate. His train of reasoning was ingenious and whimsical, but I am not at leisure to give you the detail. The result was, that he found the distemper to be incurable; but, after much study, he conceived he had discovered a method to divert the evil he could not subdue. For this purpose he caused a small building, about twelve feet square, to be erected in his garden, and furnished with some ordinary chairs and tables; and a few prints of the cheapest sort were hung against the walls.

His hope was, that, when the whitewashing frenzy seized the females of his family, they might repair to this apartment, and scrub and smear and scour to their hearts' content; and so spend the violence of the disease in this outpost, while he enjoyed himself in quiet at head-quarters. But the experiment did not answer his expectations. It was impossible it should; since a principal part of the gratification consists in the lady's having an uncontrolled right to torment her husband, at least once a-year, and to turn him out of doors, and take the reins of government into her own hands.

There is a much better contrivance than this of the philosopher, which is, to cover the walls of the house with paper; this is generally done; and though it cannot abolish, it at least shortens, the period of female dominion. The paper is decorated with flowers of various fancies, and made so ornamental, that the women have admitted the fashion without perceiving the design.

There is also another alleviation of the husband's distress: he generally has the privilege of a small room or closet for his books and papers, the key of which he is allowed to keep. This is considered as a privileged place, and stands like the land of Goshen amid the plagues of Egypt. But then he must be extremely cautious, and ever on his guard; for should he inadvertently go abroad, and leave the key in his door, the housemaid, who is always on the watch for such an opportunity, immediately enters in triumph, with buckets, brooms, and brushes; takes possession of the premises, and forthwith puts all his books and papers to rights—to his utter confusion, and sometimes serious detriment.

#### PHOSPHORESCENCE OF THE OCEAN.

As the glow-worm and the fire-fly enliven the night by land, so do many of the mollusca and other marine animals kindle their mimic fires by sea, but on a far grander and more imposing scale.

If, during a dark night, we watch attentively the advance and retreat of the breakers on the beach, we shall generally perceive the crest of each billow to be illuminated by a faint flash at the moment of its fall; and after the wave subsides, the beach will be spangled with minute but brilliant specks, which shine for a few moments, and then disappear. These lights will convey an idea of what is meant by the phosphorescence of the ocean.

At all times, and in nearly all situations, the spray thrown up by the bow of the vessel is thickly strewed during the night with little silvery stars, that dance and whirl about among the eddies, until they are lost in the distance. These luminous particles are generally so small that they are caught with difficulty, and so perfectly transparent, that they can scarcely be distinguished from the drops of brine adhering to the net. Their own radiance, by which they are visible in their native element, is soon lost when brought into the air, for it ceases instantly on the death of the animal. The few specimens which I have examined were either gelatinous mollusca or microscopic shrimps; the former being luminous throughout their entire substance, and the latter, like the glow-worm, emitting an intermittent light from a lantern near the tail.

Such were the appearances noticed in most parts of the North Atlantic Ocean, excepting the Gulf stream. The fretful waves of this region, vexed as it is by perpetual squalls, appear to be wrapped in total darkness. But in the tropical regions, and throughout the vast expanse of the Southern and Indian Oceans, the grandeur and sublimity of the night scene were often beyond description. The vivid hues of "the double-headed shot clouds," which rise like immense mountains from the water of the western horizon,

seemed to fade into twilight only to give place to a still more beautiful illumination in the bosom of the waves. The bow of the vessel scattered far around a blaze of light which shone brilliantly under the brightest moon, and was often sufficiently intense to enable us to read upon the deck. Leaning over the stern, our track resembled a vast trough of fire, studded with innumerable floating lanterns and stars, such as fall from an exploding skyrocket. In the eddies, the whirling of these bodies produced long streams of light like serpents drawn in flame, and occasionally immense globes of fire would roll along beneath the keel, at the depth of several fathoms, yet so intensely bright that the little rudder fish were distinctly visible sporting beneath the cabin windows. These globes are generally as large as a flour barrel, and, according to Peron and Lesueur, they are sometimes seen to reach the enormous diameter of twenty feet. I had once the gratification to observe one of these animals within a foot of the surface. It was a medusa, large enough to fill a bushel basket, visible in every fibre by its own illumination.

At these times the crest of every wave resembles a long line of ignited phosphorus, and every dip of the oar, or plunge of the bucket, produces a flash of light, and scatters scintillations on every side. Even the larger fish, when they approach the vessel, are followed by a luminous path like the tail of a comet, and they are often struck with the harpoon, guided by this appearance alone.

The sea at times resembles a field of snow or milk, and Peron asserts that it is often tinged with prismatic colours, varying at every moment; but these phenomena were not witnessed in our voyage.

The strangest of all the modes in which the phosphorescence of the ocean is exhibited, was witnessed near the island of Tristan D'Acunha, under circumstances too impressive to be forgotten.

The night was dark and damp, and the breeze too light to steady the vessel. She rolled heavily over the waves, making it difficult for a landsman to walk the deck. A fog bank, which hung around the northern horizon at sunset, now swept slowly down towards us. The captain ordered the light sails to be furled in expectation of a squall, and we stood leaning together over the rail, watching the mist, which approached more and more rapidly, till it resembled, in the increasing darkness, an immense wall extending from the water to the clouds, and seemed threatening to crush us beneath it. Just at this moment, a flash, like a broad sheet of lightning, spread itself over the surface of the ocean as far as the eye could reach; five or six times, at intervals of a few seconds, the flash was repeated, and then the vessel was enveloped in the fog. The breeze quickened—the bustle of preparation attracted the attention of every one, and in a few moments we were bounding along at the rate of ten miles an hour, over waves sparkling in the clear moonshine, but the "lightning of the waters" had ceased. I have always regretted that I did not ascertain by what animal this most singular phenomenon was produced, but the wild interest of the scene banished every thought of the kind. In the course of the night we passed through several beds of the salpa, and it is very probable that the flashes were produced by these little creatures, induced, by a wonderful instinct, to act in concert for some inscrutable purpose.

There are few phenomena in nature which have led to a greater diversity of opinion among modern men of science, than the luminous appearance of the ocean during the night. Some have regarded it as the effect of electricity, produced by the friction of the waves; others as the product of a species of fermentation in the water, occurring accidentally in certain places. Many have attributed it to the well-known phosphorescence of putrid fish, or to the decomposition of their slime and exuvia, and few only to the real cause—the voluntary illumination of many distinct species of marine animals. Even those authors who have acknowledged the agency of animal life in producing this wonderful appearance, have been in a manner compelled, by its universality, and by the almost incredible multiplication of beings which it infers, to admit the probable co-operation of other causes.

My own observation has led to the conclusion, that the phosphorescence of the ocean is due solely to the peculiar instinct of the mollusca, and some genera of the crustacea.

The electrical hypothesis is certainly fallacious; for were we even to grant the possibility of producing an electric light in an agitated fluid, which is itself an imperfect conductor, similar to that occasioned by the attrition of white sugar or glass in the dark, the acknowledged physical law, that like causes produce like effects, would lead us to expect an uniform diffusion of the phosphorescence over a considerable extent of water under the same latitude and longitude; but this is not the case. A ship will often be enveloped for a few moments in so bright an illumination, that a book may be read upon the deck, and at the next instant she may be involved in almost total darkness. Again, electricity is eliminated with the greatest facility in a cold and dry atmosphere; but the phosphorescence of the ocean is most considerable in tropical climates, nor is it diminished by storms or rain. The supposition of a fermentation of the surface is equally unsatisfactory, for such a process would lead to an equable diffusion of light over the whole space in which it acted. But the luminous matter is almost always seen in distinct masses or particles; and the few ex-

ceptions to this rule which have been observed, do not admit of an explanation according to the known effects of fermentation. The light eliminated by putrid fish furnishes a more plausible theory, but the very wide extent of the illumination is of itself sufficient to prove its incorrectness. It has been already shown to what an incalculable amount the living inhabitants of the ocean increase, but the reverse is true of the dead. The air and the water swarm with innumerable depurators, who devour every thing that dies, whether beneath the surface or upon it. The albatross, the stormy petrel, the Cape pigeon, some of the gulls, and other marine fowls, which are constantly soaring by thousands over every sea, seize upon all unprotected animals, dead or living, which remain within their reach. The three former birds will follow the ship for days during calm weather, to share the offals thrown over by the cook; and so ravenous is their appetite, that they are frequently caught with the hook and line baited with meat, and trolled in the wake of the vessel. I have frequently seen them bathing their feathers in the grease which floats around the refuse of the camboose, and skimming it up with their spoon-shaped bills with every demonstration of pleasure. Those bodies that sink by their gravity fall a prey to the fish, and those that are too minute to attract the attention of the larger animals, are speedily devoured by the mollusca. Thus the waters are preserved in a high degree of purity, and probably there does not remain sufficient putrescent matter in a cubic league of water to render luminous a cubic yard. In passing over an extent of ocean greater than the whole circumference of the earth, I did not see a single dead animal of any kind.

The purpose for which this phosphorescence is designed, is lost in conjecture; but when we recollect that fish are attracted to the net by the lights of the fishermen, and that many of the marine shells are said to leave their native element to crawl around a fire built upon the beach, are we not warranted in supposing that the animals of which we have been speaking, are provided with their luminous properties, in order to entice their prey within their grasp?"

#### DOMESTIC ASIDES;

OR TRUTH IN PARENTHESES.

- "I really take it very kind,  
This visit, Mrs Skinner!  
I have not seen you such an age—  
(The wretch has come to dinner!)"
- "Your daughters, too, what loves of girls—  
What heads for painters' easels!  
Come here and kiss the infant, dears—  
(And give it p'rhaps the measles!)"
- "Your charming boys I see are home  
From Reverend Mr Russell's;  
'Twas very kind to bring them both—  
(What boots for my new Brussels!)"
- "What! little Clara left at home?  
Well now I call that shabby:  
I should have lov'd to kiss her so—  
(A flabby, dabby, babby!)"
- "And Mr S., I hope he's well,  
Ah! though he lives so handy,  
He never now drops in to sup—  
(The better for our brandy!)"
- "Come, take a seat—I long to hear  
About Matilda's marriage;  
You're come of course to spend the day!—  
(Thank Heaven I hear the carriage!)"
- "What, must you go? next time I hope  
You'll give me longer measure;  
Nay—I shall see you down the stairs—  
(With most uncommon pleasure!)"
- "Good bye! good bye! remember all,  
Next time you'll take your dinners!  
(Now, David, mind I'm not at home  
In future to the Skinners!)"

—Hood's Comic Annual.

#### DEATH OF CRABBE, THE POET.

THIS event, and its approaches, are very feelingly related by the son of the poet, in his life of his father, forming part of a new edition of the works of Crabbe, now publishing by Mr Murray:—

"On one essential subject it would be wrong to be silent. I have stated, that the most important of all considerations had had an increasing influence over his mind. The growth had been ripening with his age, and was especially perceptible in his later years. With regard to the ordinances of religion, he was always manifestly pained, if, when absent from home on a Sunday, he had been induced to neglect either the morning or evening services: in his private devotions, as his household can testify, he was most exemplary and earnest up to the period of this attack; yet at that time, when fear often causes the first real prayer to be uttered, then did he, as it were, confine

himself to the inward workings of his pious and resigned spirit, occasionally, however, betrayed by aspirational most applicable to his circumstances. Among the intelligible fragments that can never be forgotten, were frequent exclamations of, 'My time is short; it is well to be prepared for death.' 'Lucy—this was the affectionate servant that attended along with his sons—'dear Lucy, be earnest in prayer! May you see your children's children.' From time to time he expressed great fear that we were all over-exerting ourselves in sitting up at night with him; but the last night he said, 'Have patience with me—it will soon be over. Stay with me, Lucy, till I am dead, and then let others take care of me.' This night was most distressing. The changes of posture sometimes necessary, gave him extreme pain, and he said, 'This is shocking.' Then, again, he became exhausted, or his mind wandered in a troubled sleep. Awaking a little refreshed, he held out his hand to us, saying, as if he felt it might be the last opportunity, 'God bless you—be good, and come to me!' Even then, though we were all overpowered, and lost all self-command, he continued firm. His countenance now began to vary and alter. Once, however, we had the satisfaction of seeing it lighted up with an indescribable expression of joy, as he appeared to be looking at something before him, and uttered these words, 'That blessed book!'

"After another considerable interval of apparent insensibility, he awoke, and said, in a tone so melancholy that it rang in my ears for weeks after, 'I thought it had been all over,' with such an emphasis on the *all*! Afterwards he said, 'I cannot see you now.' When I said, 'We shall soon follow,' he answered, 'Yes, yes!' I mentioned his exemplary fortitude; but he appeared unwilling to have any good ascribed to himself.

"When the incessant presents and inquiries of his friends in the town were mentioned, he said, 'What a trouble I am to them all!' And in the course of the night, these most consolatory words were distinctly heard, 'All is well at last!' Soon after, he said, imperceptibly, 'You must make an entertainment;' meaning for his kind Trowbridge friends after his departure. These were the last intelligible words I heard. Lucy, who could scarcely be persuaded to leave him, day or night, and was close by him when he died, says that the last words he uttered were, 'God bless you—God bless you!'

"About one o'clock he became apparently torpid, and I left him with my brother, requesting to be called instantly, in case of the least returning sensibility—but it never returned. As my brother was watching his countenance at seven o'clock in the morning, a rattling in the throat was heard once, and twice, but the third or fourth time all was over."

#### MAKING A PAIR OF SCISSORS.

Simple as a pair of scissors appears to be, yet it is no less true that the cost of the workmanship is greater in proportion to the first cost of the raw material, than it is in almost any other instance of a hardware article. The diversity of shape is not greater than the variety of price; for whilst a single pair is sometimes set down at ten guineas in an invoice, whole thousands of scissors of another description are sent yearly to South America and the East Indies, which fetch no more than somewhat about threepence a dozen. A half-crown pair is made in the following way:—The blade is forged on the anvil from a bar of steel, and is cut off with a chisel, with the quantity necessary for the shank and bow. The rough blade is called the mould, and a small hole is punched through it, which is nothing more than the rudimentary state of the bow, which is afterwards completely developed by hammering. The next process is putting the article into the fire to soften it, after which it is submitted to the filer, who gives it the necessary symmetry, and whose especial duty it is to bore the hole for the connecting screw, by which the two blades are held in proper position. In this state it is taken under the protection of the grinder, who gives to the blade that peculiar flexed surface which is so essential to the constitution of a pair of scissors. The blades are then placed in the hands of the women, who make the bows, and the ornaments, and then are returned to the workshop, when the nuptials between the two are celebrated, and are made as it were, one, or, as the cant phrase is, are made to *walk and talk* well together. This, however, is only a small part of the process; for, in the state just described, they are completely enveloped in fine iron wire, when the screw is taken out, and the blades and shanks are hardened by the usual process. The wire being stripped off, the blades are again sent to the grinder, and at last obtain in his hands the completion of their development. They are finally returned to the workman, who inserts the screw, and makes the scissors completely fit for use.—*Cabinet Cyclopaedia.*

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